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Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5118
INFO AMEMBASSY BAMAKO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BANGJUL
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 DAKAR 5736

PARIS FOR OECD, ROME FOR FODAG

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OVIP (CARTER, LILLIAN), SG
SUBJECT: MISS LILLIAN'S VISIT TO SENEGAL - A RESOUNDING SUCCESS

1. SUMMARY: MISS LILLIAN'S VISIT TO SENEGAL JULY 26 - 29 HAS BEEN A RESOUDING SUCCESS. SHE WAS RECEIVED WITH GREAT WARMTH AND PERSONAL ATTENTION BY PRESIDENT SENGHOR. THE INTEREST OF THE MAN IN THE STREET IN HER VISIT HAS BEEN EXTREMELY HIGH. PRESS COVERAGE HAS BEEN OUTSTANDING -- SEVERAL ARTICLES, PHOTOGRAPHS ON PAGE ONE ALMOST EVERY DAY THIS WEEK IN THE MAIN DAILY "LE SOLEIL". RADIO AND TELEVISION COVERAGE HAS BEEN EQUALLY EXTENSIVE, CONVEYING MISS LILLIAN'S WARMTH, HER VITALITY AND HER AND PRESIDENT CARTER'S DEEP INTEREST IN THE PROBLEMS OF THE SAHEL. HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF SENEGALESE HAVE SEEN AND HEARD ABOUT MISS LILLIAN'S VISIT, DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY. SHE HAS ALSO GAINED ALOCAL REPUTATION AS A GOOD LUCK SYMBOL, NEWS OF THE TORRENTIAL DOWNPOUR SHE BROUGHT TO THE
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GAMBIA (HEAVIEST RAIN IN 10 YEARS) HAVING PRECEEDED HER TO DAKAR. THROUGH HER PRESENCE, HER ACTIVITIES, AND HER WORDS, MISS LILLIAN HAS BEEN EMINENTLY SUCCESSFUL IN HER MISSION TO SENEGAL. SHE HAS EFFECTIVELY CONVEYED THE PRESIDENT'S AND AMERICA'S CONCERN FOR THE RURAL POOR, OUR INTEREST AND SUPPORT FOR RAISING FOOD PRODUCTION IN THE SAHEL, AND OUR VIGOROUS ENCOURAGEMENT TO A MORE IMPORTANT AND MORE EQUITABLE ROLE FOR

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WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT AND LIFE IN GENERAL. END SUMMARY.

2. PRESIDENT SENGHOR, WHO HAD INVITED MISS LILLIAN AND HER IMMEDIATE PARTY TO STAY IN THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE, TREATED MISS LILLIAN AS A COMBINATION OF VISITOR OF
STATE AND OLD FAMILY FRIEND. HE WAS WAITING FOR HER PERSONALLY ON THE PALACE STEPS WHEN SHE ARRIVED FROM THE AIRPORT MID-MORNING JULY 26. AFTER GREETING HER WARMLY, HE ESCORTED HER TO HER UPSTAIRS APARTMENT WHERE HE PRESENTED MISS LILLIAN WITH A MAGNIFICENT TAPESTRY FROM THE NATIONAL MANUFACTORY AT THIES. THAT EVENING MISS LILLIAN WAS PRESIDENT SENGHOR'S GUEST OF HONOR AT A SMALL DINNER IN THE PALACE IN THE PRESENCE OF PRIME MINISTER AND MADAME ABDOU DIOUF. PRESIDENT SENGHOR SAID HE WAS DELIGHTED WITH MISS LILLIAN'S WARMTH, SIMPLICITY, AND HER UTTER CANDOR AND INFORMALITY. AT DINNER HE PRAISED HER AND THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT'S INTEREST IN THE PEOPLE OF THE AFRICAN SAHEL COUNTRIES AND THE SYMBOLISM OF HER VISIT AS A SIGN OF AMERICA'S SUPPORT AND COOPERATION. DURING MISS LILLIAN'S TWO DAY STAY IN THE PALACE, PRESIDENT SENGHOR FOUND SEVERAL OCASSIONS TO DROP IN AND CHAT. WHEN HE BID HER FAREWELL THIS MORNING, HE TOLD HER HE KNEW FROM HIS OWN TRAVELS AND TALKS WITH AMERICAN BLACKS IN THE SOUTH HOW MUCH SHE AND HER SON HAD WORKED FOR RACIAL HARMONY AND EQUALITY IN THE STATES. SENGHOR TOLD MISS LILLIAN OF HIS GREAT ADMIRATION FOR JIMMY CARTER, AND MORE IMPORTANT, HIS GREAT AFFECTION. MISS LILLIAN, EXPRESSING HER APPRECIATION FOR THE WARMTH AND AFFECTION OF HER WELCOME IN
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SENEGAL, ASKED PRESIDENT SENGHOR TO BE SURE AND VISIT HER IN PLAINS, GEORGIA, ON HIS NEXT VISIT TO THE U.S. SHE SAID SHE WOULD CONSIDER HIS VISIT TO BE SUCH A SPECIAL TREAT THAT SHE WOULD MAKE HER LARGE, COMFORTABLE BED AVAILABLE FOR HIM AND MADAME SENGHOR.

3. DURING HER TWO DAY VISIT TO SENEGAL, MISS LILLIAN ADHERED TO A RIGOROUS SCHEDULE WHICH, AT THE HEIGHT OF THIS NOT SUMMER SEASON, HAS TAXED PEOPLE FAR YOUNGER. ON HER FIRST DAY MISS LILLIAN VISIT THE AMERICAN EMBASSY AND GREETED OVER 150 MEMBERS OF THE U.S. MISSION STAFF AND THEIR FAMILIES. SHE THEN TOOK THE FERRY BOAT TO GOREE ISLAND, THE HISTORIC SLAVE AND TRADING CENTER, FOR LUCH WITH MINISTER ASSANE SECK. HER MEALTIME ADVICE TO MINISTER SECK, A TOWERING EX-ATHLETE, WAS TO SOLVE SENEGAL'S FOREIGN EXCHANGE PROBLEMS BY HIRING HIMSELF OUT TO AN AMERICAN BASKETBALL TEAM AT ONE MILLION DOLLARS A YEAR. SECK, AN EX-BASKETBALLER, WAS HIGHLY APPRECIATIVE.
LATE IN THE AFTERNOON SHE RECEIVED A TUMULTUOUS WELCOME AMIDST TOM-TOMS, AFRICAN DANCERS AND HUNDREDS OF BRIGHTLY CLAD SENEGALESE WOMEN AT THE WOMEN'S CENTER OF GREATER DAKAR. MISS LILLIAN TOLD THE CHEERING WOMEN HOW MUCH WARMTH AND AFFECTION SHE FELT ON THE OCASSION AND THE CROWD RESPONDED WITH A ROARING

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OVATION. THAT EVENING SHE HAD DINNER WITH THE PRESIDENT.

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PARIS FOR OECD, ROME FOR FODAG

4. THE HGIHLIGHT OF MISS LILLIAN'S SECOND DAY IN DAKAR WAS HER VISIT TO DENI MALICK GUEYE, A VILLAGE 30 MILES OUTSIDE DAKAR. ESCORTED BY MINISTER OF SOCIAL ACTION MADAME CAROLINE DIOP AND MINISTER FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT ROBERT SAGNA, SHE INSPECTED AN IMPRESSIVE VILLAGE COOPERATIVE PROJECT. THIS PROJECT, DESIGNED TO TRAIN YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE TECHNIQUES OF AGRICULTURE, IRRIGATION AND MARKETING, AND THEREBY TO KEEP THEM ON THE FARMS AND OUT OF THE CROWDED CITIES, IS A JOINT UNDERTAKING OF THE SENEGALESE GOVERNMENT AND THE YMCA, WITH ASSISTANCE OF THE PEACE CORPS AND USAID. AGAIN, AS AT THE WOMEN'S CENTER THE PREVIOUS DAY, MISS LOLLIAN WAS GREETED BY AN ENTHUSIASTIC CROWD -- HUNDREDS OF VILLAGERS, LOCAL OFFICIALS, THE VILLAGE ELDERS IN THEIR FINEST, DANCERS AND DRUMMERS. MINISTER SAGNA DESCRIBED MISS LILLIAN'S PRESENCE IN DENI MALICK GUEYE AS SYMBOLIZING "THE SOLIDARITY AND GENEROSITY OF THE GREAT AMERICAN PEOPLE," AND AS PROOF OF THE ATTENTION WHICH AMERICA IS GIVING TO THE
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INHABITANTS OF THE SAHEL REGION OF AFRICA. ON HER WAY BACK TO DAKAR, MISS LILLIAN AND HER PARTY STOPPED TO VISIT THE FAO HORTICULTURAL CENTER AT CAMBARENE, AGAIN UNDERLINING HER AND THE PRESIDENT'S ENCOURAGEMENT TO SENEGALESE INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS AIMED AT INCREASING FOOD PRODUCTION IN THE SAHEL.

5. MISS LILLIAN'S LAST OFFICIAL VISIT IN SENEGAL WAS TO THE INSTITUTE OF FOOD TECHNOLOGY WHERE SHE FOUND A KINDRED SOUL. MADAME MARIE-THERESE BASSE, DIRECTOR OF THE INSITUUTE AND NIECE OF PRESIDENT SENGHOR, IS A FELLOW RECIPIENT OF THE FAO CERES MEDAL, THE SAME MEDAL AWARDED TO MISS LILLIAN IN ROME JULY 21 AS RECOGNITION AND TESTIMONY FOR HER CONCERN AND HER WORK WITH THE RURAL, THE IMPOVERISHED, AND THE UNDERNOURISHED. DR. BASSE SHOWED MISS LILLIAN IN SOME DETAIL THE EXCELLENT RESEARCH AND PRACTICAL WORK BEING DONE BY THE INSTITUTE IN ENCOURAGING THE CONSUMPTION OF HIGHER PROTEIN AND LOCALLY PRODUCED MILLET BREAD, IN DEVISING INEXPENSIVE MACHINERY TO TAKE THE DRUDGERY OUT OF FOOD PREPARATION, AND ABOVE ALL, IN EXPLOITING FOR PROCESSING AND MARKETING AN INCREASING VARIETY OF SENEGAL'S OWN FRUITS, VEGETABLES, MEATS AND GRAINS.

6. THAT EVENING, AT THE AMBASSADOR'S RECEPTION, OVER 60 ENTHUSIASTIC PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS FROM ALL CORNERS OF SENEGAL HAD A PRIVATE HALF HOUR SESSION WITH FELLOW VOLUNTEER MISS LILLIAN CARTER. SOME 400 SENEGALESE, PARTICULARLY THOSE ACTIVE IN DEVELOPMENT WORK, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS AND MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY ALSO HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO MEET AND TO CHAT WITH HER

7. WHAT WAS ACCOMPLISHED? WE THINK MISS LILLIAN AND HER PARTY DID A SINGULARLY EFFECTIVE JOB IN CARRYING OUT THE OBJECTIVE OF HER VISIT. HER PRESENCE, HER MESSAGE AND THE IMAGE SHE PROJECTED WERE JUST RIGHT. SHE SAID SHE HAD COME AS THE UNCLASSIFIED

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EMISSARY OF THE PRESIDENT AND OF A COUNTRY WHICH UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEMS OF THE RURAL POOR, WHICH SUPPORT THE CONSIDERABLE EFFORTS OF THE SAHEL COUNTRIES THEMSELVES AND OTHER DONORS TO OVERCOME THESE PROBLEMS, AND WHICH FEEL A LONG-TERM COMMITMENT TO HELP TO INCREASE FOOD PRODUCTION AND IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG THE SAHEL PEOPLE. MISS LILLIAN DID AN EQUALLY EFFECTIVE JOB IN TRANSMITTING HER OWN, THE PRESIDENT'S AND AMERICA'S INTEREST IN CREATING MUCH GREATER OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT. THROUGHOUT HER TRIP MISS LILLIAN EMPHASIZED THAT WOMEN CAN DO MORE, CAN DOT IT BETTER, AND OUGHT TO BE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY. THE CONSTANT PRESENCE AT MISS LILLIAN'S SIDE OF MADAME CAROLINE DIOP, MINISTER OF SOCIAL ACTION AND SENEGAL'S MOST PROMINENT WOMAN POLITICIAN, OF

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MINISTER OF WOMEN'S AFFAIRS MAIMOUNA KANE AND THE ENGAGING VICE PRESIDENT OF THE SENEGALESE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, MADAME LENA GUEYE EFFECTIVELY REMINDED THE SENEGALESE PUBLIC WHAT A GOOD PART OF MISS LILLIAN'S VISIT WAS REALLY ABOUT.

8. A TIRED BUT HAPPY EMBASSY IN DAKAR WISHES MISS LILLIAN GODSPEED AND ALL FURTHER SUCCESS IN HER VISIT TO THE SAHEL AND IN HER EFFORTS TO LET AMERICANS KWNOW HOW MUCH THEIR HELP IS NEEDED -- AND APPRECIATED IN THIS PART OF AFRICA.
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